

Emergency Responder

WASHINGTON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIVISION



WASHINGTON MILITARY DEPARTMENT

July-August 2002

Washington Amber Alert Program targets Jan. 1

Plans call for Washington's Civil Authorities and Broadcasters to have a fully operational Amber Alert program by Jan. 1 for enlisting the public's help in cases of abducted children, according to Don Miller, telecommunications section supervisor in the Emergency Management Division's (EMD) Response and Recovery Unit.

Until the Amber code program is installed, he said law enforcement officials in Washington could use the civil emergency code using either local or state operations centers to alert the public to urgent child abduction cases.

Miller said the Washington State Patrol (WSP) has taken the lead in developing a comprehensive state level Amber plan. The state plan would include Emergency Alert system activation by EMD, highway reader board sign activations by the Department of Transportation, the WSP's statewide teletype/internet distribution (ACCESS) system.

The state plan also might possibly include web sites, e-mail services, the Attorney General's Office alert system and other systems such as the Regional Public Information Network, Miller said.

He said CPT Glenn Cramer of the WSP and his staff are currently drafting procedures for WSP to deal with a local Amber Alert that might be elevated to a statewide alert. The draft procedures and policies will include input from the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, DOT, and emergency management agencies. Draft procedures will be shared with WASPC at the association's Sept.



A large smoke cloud mushroomed above the Deer Point Fire July 24 in Chelan County as the fire quickly expanded in size. The fire was ignited by an abandoned camp fire July 15. By late August, the fire had grown to more than 42,000 acres and was 75 percent contained. The fire had destroyed five residences and four other buildings. Fire suppression costs totaled more than \$16 million. (U.S. Forest Service photo)

\$5.1 million approved for hazard mitigation grants

Seven projects totaling \$5.1 million have been approved so far in the first round of Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds authorized through the Nisqually Earthquake disaster assistance, according to Martin Best, manager of the hazard mitigation program in the Mitigation, Analysis and Planning Unit of the Emergency Management Division.

A total of 74 applications were submitted for the first round of \$10 million available for grants from the Nisqually earthquake assistance. Applications currently are being reviewed for the second \$10 million round of hazard mitigation grants. Projects and amounts approved so far in the first round of hazard mitigation grants were:

- **City of Aberdeen – Fire Department, Headquarters Seismic Retrofit.** Mechanical ties are necessary to limit beam movement and ensure the roof structure will not fall down on the staff and Fire/EMS equipment. \$35,622.
- **Highline Water District – Reservoir Seismic Retrofit.** Upgrade includes retrofit of four separate water storage reservoirs. It also includes retrofitting of existing facilities to meet current structural codes. \$2,040,480.
- **King County – Cedar River High Priority Buyouts.** Project will involve acquisition and removal of three homes located in the floodway of the Cedar River. These homes, built prior to establishment of the national flood insurance program, are subject to deep and high velocity flows and have experienced repetitive damages. \$899,660.

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Washington Amber Alert Program targets Jan. 1

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19 meeting in Bellingham.

Miller said Washington State's Emergency Communications Committee in May adopted guidelines for Amber Alerts: These guidelines were:

- Activation points should be a 24-hour facility.
- Development of procedures should mirror and complement existing Emergency Alert System (EAS) activation procedures.
- An Amber Alert should be treated like all other EAS events
- Radio and television stations, cable operators and local officials should work together to ensure activations are disseminated to the public. The actual broadcast of an Amber Alert is voluntary and the misuse of this privilege might be cause for broadcasters and cable operators to ease to participate in disseminating these messages.
- The Federal Communications Commission-approved event code for an abducted child alert is "CAE".
- An Amber Alert program is a great opportunity for law enforcement to get involved in EAS with their dispatch centers or activation points.
- Consider having a designated person representing the Amber Alert program serve on your local Area Emergency Communications Committee.
- In local areas, use the Local Relay Network for this type alert as you would for all alerts. In the event that an Alert covering a wider area than the Local Relay Network serves is required, Washington Emergency Management may originate the alert upon request.
- In order not to seriously hamper the effectiveness of an Amber Alert, reject efforts to affiliate with a particular station or law enforcement entity. All stations and law enforcement entities should participate equally.

\$5.1 million approved for hazard mitigation grants

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- **King County Water District #90 – Seismic Retrofit of 4.75 Million Gallon Steel Water Storage Reservoir #1.** The project would include the seismic retrofit with a new ring wall foundation installed with anchors or tie downs to the tank's wall in order to lessen the effect of an earthquake and reduce the potential of what is called "elephant's foot" and/or the shearing effect of the supply piping to the reservoir. \$625,000.
- **Lakehaven Utility District – Water Tank Seismic Retrofit.** The tank is 80 feet tall and is over 40 years old and not built to current seismic standards. The tank will be retrofitted by adding new anchors and a ring wall around the perimeter, using friction piles to resist the uplift. \$170,953.
- **La Conner School District – Auditorium/Cafeteria/Elementary Seismic Upgrade.** All buildings will be modified using a combination of anchoring of floor- and roof-to-walls parapet bracing as needed; new support beams as needed; anchoring concrete/masonry walls to roof; and reinforcing trusses and repair pilings as needed to support buildings on flood plain. \$702,658.
- **Onalaska School District – Onalaska High School Gym/Red Cross Shelter Seismic Retrofit.** The project will remove the roof structure to reach the vertical walls and to reinforce with re-bar and mortar. A pitched roof would replace the flat roof to reduce inward loading forces on the walls and prevent build-up of water weight or ash on the roof walls. \$647,757.

Locke okays applications for \$6 million in DOJ grants

Gov. Gary Locke has approved the state's application for more than \$6 million in domestic preparedness grants from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) for federal fiscal year 2002

"My approval completes the state's application for these grants that will improve the emergency response capability in jurisdictions across the state," said Locke. "The grants will fund training and equipment for police, fire and emergency medical responders who are the keystone to providing first-line emergency response in Washington."

The Washington application seeks \$5.9 million in equipment grants and \$278,000 for training exercises. A minimum of 80 per cent of the grant money is to be allocated to local jurisdictions. The state has received a total of \$4 million in DOJ domestic preparedness grants since 2001.

Locke pointed out that grant money will be assigned according to priorities and recommendations established by the State Emergency Management Council and its State Committee on Terrorism (COT). "Their work has given Washington an effective statewide plan to use the grants to prepare for threats and acts of terrorism," he said.

The COT, which was appointed in January 2000, established grant priorities based on current assessments of each county and applicable state agencies. The committee also developed a centralized direct purchase process to maximize purchasing power for the grants and to attain standardization and interoperability of equipment between jurisdictions.

State agencies now part of state mitigation plan

New Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) guidance will allow state agencies to participate in the state's hazard mitigation plan, rather than prepare their own plans to remain eligible for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

For more information on the state plan, contact Mark Stewart, EMD's hazard mitigation strategist, at m.stewart@emd.wa.gov or (253) 512-7072 .

Oenning elected NENA Western Regional VP

Bob Oenning, Washington State E911 Administrator, was elected to the 2002-2003 Executive Board of Directors of the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) in June to serve a two-year term as the Western Regional Vice President.

As vice president, he represents Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Hawaii, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, U.S. Pacific Territories, Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Island nations, and Asia. Oenning is certified through NENA as an Emergency Number Professional and serves on several NENA work committees.

He replaces Bill McMurray of the Marin County Sheriff's Department in San Rafael, Calif. NENA's 7,000 members and 48 chapters are dedicated to improving 911 and emergency communications. The association also serves as a link in the delivery of emergency services.

Oenning also is Secretary/Treasurer of the National Association of State 911 Administrators (NASNA). NASNA represents 32 states that have a central 911 planning or administrative function. It focuses on 911 issues, including wireless regulation and cost recovery, and developing 911 relationships with Automatic Crash Notification industries, departments of transportation, and railroads.

Oenning serves as a board member of the ComCARE Alliance. The ComCARE Board Leadership Circle is the Alliance's governing body.

The board provides direction to the Alliance, sets major policy goals, and directs the organization's professional staff. Individual board members are actively involved in the organization's day-to-day operations and are consulted by ComCARE's executive director on a regular basis.



Ron Crooks, of EMD's Response and Recovery Unit, is congratulated by co-workers, Bobbie Kuenstler, left, and Kathy Paterson, right, at a June reception to honor his retirement from state service. Crooks, who joined the Washington Military Department in 1991, had worked in the radiological instrument program and in facility maintenance and search and rescue coordinator positions. An EMD award stated all of Crooks' work had "truly enhanced the preparedness of Washington State and its citizens. He has always given willingly and unselfishly...to assist others. Ron's selfless dedication and devotion serve as a shining example to us all." (EMD Photo by Sandy Bigelow)

Work continues on Nisqually public assistance projects

Work continues in the Emergency Management Division's Public Assistance Program on more than 1,850 individual projects to repair public and eligible private non-profit facilities damaged in the magnitude 6.8 Nisqually Earthquake of February 2001.

As of July 31, the program estimated project costs totaled more than \$65 million, of which \$48 million is from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's public assistance program and \$11 million from the state. Projects ranged in cost from \$1,000 to \$5.2 million.

Through the end of July, the program reported more than \$19 million in federal and state aid went to applicants. Forty-eight of the 340 public assistance applicants, or 14 percent, have completed their projects and have been closed out.

Two major public assistance projects approved this summer were:

State Capitol Campus Repairs

A total of \$10 million in public assistance aid was approved in July for capitol campus repairs in Olympia. More than half of the \$10 million will be for repairs of earthquake damage to the 75-year-old Legislative Building, which sus-

tained interior and exterior damage.

The public assistance aid also included \$598,000 for the rebuilding of Marathon Park on Olympia's Capitol Lake. Park repairs include replacement of 2,700 square yards of asphalt pavement, installation of an irrigation system, replacement of damaged restrooms, and installation of drainage pipes and curbs.

At the Capitol Lake Interpretative Center, 212 tons of damaged asphalt trail will be removed and replaced. The center received \$326,000 in public assistance aid.

Western State Hospital

The hospital received \$1 million in public assistance aid for damages to its Building 7 that housed patients sent to the hospital by the courts. The building was severely damaged by the Nisqually earthquake and is slated to be demolished.

The public assistance funds will upgrade security at Building 29, which is an adult psychiatric ward to reduce patient population in the new Center for Forensic Services. With the security improvements to Building 29, the hospital can house 300 patients referred by the courts, compared to 225 to 235 patients in Building 7.

Farm disaster aid sought

Gov. Gary Locke in August requested four additional U.S. Department of Agriculture disaster declarations for crop damages and losses this year in eastern Washington.

The requests were for the following counties and crops:

- Franklin County's fruit and vegetable crops that suffered damage from hail, high winds and excessive rain June 8-9.
- Whitman County's wheat, barley, and pea crops that sustained damage from cold weather on April 24, May 12 and from June 6-8.
- Lincoln County's winter wheat crop that was damaged by freezing temperatures June 7-8.
- Spokane County's fruit and soft fruit crops that were damaged by freezing temperatures between April 23-May 7 and the county's timothy hay, other hay, forage crops, bluegrass seed, winter wheat, peas and lentils that suffered damage from freezing temperatures June 7-8.

In June, Locke requested four agriculture disaster declarations for crop damages this year in six eastern Washington counties.

If approved by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, the declarations could provide emergency low-interest Farm Service Agency loans to farmers to cover production and farm property losses.

WSEMA fall conference set for Sept. 24-25

Hazard mitigation planning and homeland security will be featured topics at the Washington State Emergency Management Association's (WSEMA) fall conference at Ocean Shores's Shilo Inn Sept. 24-25, according to John Scheer, WSEMA treasurer.

Conference speakers will include Rick Arthur of Starbucks Co.; Willie Scott of the U.S. Geological Survey and Washington Department of Ecology Dam Safety Office; and Maj. Gen. Timothy J. Lowenberg, Washington Military Department director.

Registration is \$100 through Sept. 15 and \$150 thereafter. Checks should be made payment to: WSEMA Fall Conference: John Scheer, treasurer; 502 Boeing St.; Pasco, Wash., 99301.

Buckley gets FEMA Grant

The city of Buckley Fire Department was awarded a \$73,854 grant in July from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the U.S. Fire Administration for fire operations and firefighter safety.

FEMA said the award was part of the first round of 2002 grants from the Assistance to Firefighters Program. More than 19,500 fire departments submitted grant requests this year totaling almost \$2.2 billion, according to FEMA.

Personnel

Steve DeBow was presented a Washington Army National Guard Commendation Medal by Maj. Gen. Timothy J. Lowenberg, the adjutant general and military department director, in an Emergency Operations Center ceremony July 23. The award honored DeBow's leadership to the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program for the past 10 years. As a result of his efforts, "both the state and Benton County are better prepared to respond should an event occur at the Umatilla Chemical Depot."

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July-August, 2002. Published by the Emergency Management Division of the Washington Military Department.

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